DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 277 804 UD 025 290

AUTHOR Feld, Marcia Marker; And Others
TITLE The Educational Policy Environment: National, State, and Local Educational Policy Assessment. Stamford Educational Public Policy Impact Study. Volume III.
INSTITUTION Stamford Public Schools, Conn.
PUB DATE 83
NOTE 62p.; For other volumes in this study, see UD 025 288-291.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Finance; *Educational Policy; Educational Technology; Elementary Secondary Education; Government Role; Government School Relationship; *Private Education; Private School Aid; *Public Education; Public Policy; *School Policy; Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS *Connecticut (Stamford)

ABSTRACT

In the last decade, Stamford has been transformed from a suburban town to an urban center of national renown. A responsive yet directive public school system is critical in preserving a feeling of community. The Stamford Educational Planning Committee, a team of interdisciplinary professionals and a broad-based community group, examined trends in the environment and their effect upon public education in Stamford, and proposed policy changes. This third volume of their four-part report consists of two chapters. Chapter I examines the following educational policy changes occuring throughout the country: (1) lack of support for public education; (2) adjustments in school finance reform policies; (3) the changing role of the federal government; (4) the increasing popularity of the private school sector; and (5) the emergence of educational technologies. Without adequate funding, it will be impossible to meet the needs of a technological world inhabited by a diverse group of people. Chapter II offers an in-depth view of the role of private schools in America. Data are shared from a recent study of public and private schools; the results of five studies conducted on this topic throughout the country are presented; and the common reasons cited by parents for transferring children from public to private schools are identified. Appendixes contain a list of working papers for the study, lists of persons consulted and interviewed for the study, and an interview guideline. (LHW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

1-22-89

ED277804

STAMFORD EDUCATIONAL PUBLIC POLICY IMPACT STUDY

VOLUME III

The Educational Policy Environment:
National, State, and Local Educational Policy Assessment

Stamford Public Schools
1983

UD025280

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Dr. Marcia M. Fekl
ANALYTICS

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

STAMFORD EDUCATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

1981 - 1982

Heather Alexander	Newfield School
John Anderson	Urban League of Southwest Connecticut
Scottie Annable	Community
Jill Beaudry	Community
Louise Berkman	Community
Gloria Biliunas	CONOCO
T. Blackshear	Community
James Bonner	Chairman, Taxpayers Association of Stamford
Marilyn Bonoff	Community
Cynthia Bowser	Southfield Community Organization
Otto Calder (Chairman)	Community
Virginia Campbell	Community
Jennifer Carr	Community
Stan Cooper	Community
Mary Corcoran	Family and Children's Services
Robert B. Davies	Stamford Education Association
Maria De Jesus Solis	Children's Creative Workshop - Ryles School
Robert M. Frangione	Stamford Education Association
Barbara Friedman	League of Women Voters
Woodrow Glover	Town Hall
Rose Marie Grasso	Community
Jack Heffrenan	G.T.E.
Lani Hoch	Community
Rev. Mel Hoover	Council of Churches and Synagogues
Ellen Isidro	Parent
Sandy Kinseley	Community
Pamela Koprowski	Champion, International
Jennifer Lapine	National Council of Jewish Women
Ted Lewis	Chairman, Planning Board
Roselyn Mangot	Community
Barbara McCarty	Community
Sandra Melzer	Westhill High School
Maria Nakian	Community
Roslyn Nesin	Community
Alan R. Neilsen	Pitney Bowes, Inc.
Margaret Nolan	Board of Finance

STAMFORD EDUCATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE - CONTINUED

Carmella Piacentini	Olin Corporation
William Pickens	Vice President, Union Trust
Marianne Pollack	Stamford Economic Assistance Corporation
Jean V. Ranhosky	National Council of Senior Citizens
Carmen Rivera	Director, Hispanic Center
Dr. Charles Robinson	Stamford Administrative Unit
Judy Rodwin	Community
Marie M. Romero	BUTP - Stamford High School
Barbara Sachs	Community
Joan Sandow	Community
Christine Schoen	League of Women Voters
Sandra Schlachtmeyer	Community
Helen Seifert	Century 21 Realty
Rev. William Sexton	Council of Churches
Flora Smithline	Community
Nell Taylor	Continental Group, Inc.
Marilyn Timbers	Riverbank School
Dotty Vlamis	Community
Pam Yardis	Community

STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Jerome B. Jones	Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Norman Walsh	Assistant Superintendent for Research and Development
Mr. Alan Grafton	Assistant Superintendent

STAMFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

S.A. Signore	President
Ellen P. Camhi	Vice President

STAMFORD EDUCATIONAL PUBLIC POLICY IMPACT STUDY

STAFF

Dr. Marcia Marker Feld	Study Director
Ms. Betsy Fobert	Chief Planner
Ms. Barbara Brauner Berns	Educational Policy Planner
Mr. Edward Feinman	Fiscal Policy Analyst
Dr. Thomas D. Galloway	Housing Policy Planner
Dr. Ned Hill	Economist
Ms. Carol Thomas	Physical Policy Planner
Ms. Lia Vasconcelos	Demographic Policy Analyst
Ms. Donna Vigneau	Education Policy Planner
Mr. David Winsor	Demographic/Education Policy Analyst
Ms. Gloria Abrams	Research Associate
Ms. Joanne Cassulo	Research Associate
Ms. Jean Devine	Research Associate
Ms. Doris Minor	Research Associate
Ms. Eve Sternberg	Research Associate
Ms. Margaret M. Horak	Research Assistant
Ms. Deborah M. Kupa	Research Assistant
Ms. Linda A. Louro	Research Assistant
Ms. Eileen Cook	Secretary
Ms. Krista Lawrence Page	Secretary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME III

List of Illustrations vii

List of Tables viii

Preface ix

Introduction xii

Chapter I: TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Public Support for Education 1
Trends Affecting support of and Opinion Towards Schools . . . 1
Discussion of Public Support for Education 2
School Finance Reform Policies 5
Discussion of Finance Policies 5
Analysis of Finance Policies 7
Role of the Federal Government in Education 7
Historical Role of Federal Government 7
Contemporary Role of Federal Government 8
Increasing Popularity of the Private School Sector 11
Emerging Educational Issues in the 1980s 13
Educational Technology 13
Shortage of Teachers in Science and Mathematics 15
Curriculum and Instruction Concerns 16
Relationship Between National Issues and Trends and Stamford . 17
School Finance Policies 18
Role of Federal Government in Education 19
Public Support for Education in Stamford 20
Private School Support 22
Emerging Educational Issues 23
Conclusion 27

(continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS - CONTINUED

Chapter II: PRIVATE SCHOOL CONCERNS

Results of a Survey of Private Elementary and Secondary Schools . 28
Experiences in Selected American Cities 29
California United School District 29
San Francisco Bay Area 30
Seattle Public Schools 31
Montgomery County, Maryland 32
Washington, D.C. 33
Common Elements in Student Transfers from Public to Private Schools 34
Conclusion 36

APPENDICES

Appendix A: List of Working Papers for Stamford Educational Public Policy Impact Study 38
Appendix B: Participants in the Consultation Process 39
Appendix C: List of Administrators and Department Heads Interviewed 41
Appendix D: Student Liaison Committee Interviewed 43
Appendix E: Interview Guideline 44

Bibliography 46

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

i - One Analysis: Identification of Critical Policy Impact Elements xviii

LIST OF TABLES

i - One	Study Components	xx
I - One	Educational Policy Trends: Diagrammatic Schema	4
II - One	Frequency of Reasons Parents Cited for Transferring Children to Private Schools	35

PREFACE

Unlike any community of comparable size in New England, Stamford, Connecticut has undergone vast changes in the past two decades. These changes, which have occurred in the urban systems[1] which comprise the context of the planning of its public school system, have begun and will continue to alter the character of the Stamford Public Schools.

A goal of the Stamford Public Schools is to maximize cost-effective, desegregated, quality education in an optimum learning environment while providing for change with a minimum of disruption for students. In order to attain that goal, this study was requested by the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Jerome B. Jones, and the Stamford Educational Planning Committee to provide complementary information to their own studies. It is an assessment of the changes in the social and physical policy environment affecting Stamford and the implications of these changes upon the future of public education in the city. Initiated in January 1982, it was completed in December of that year.

The four volumes which present the results of this study document the impact of the future direction of policy trends upon the educational programs and services of the Stamford Public Schools. They must be read in context with the subcommittee reports of the Educational Planning Committee. It is our expectation that these studies will enable the informal dialogue necessary for making educated decisions regarding the future of Stamford's public school system to

---

[1]The urban systems in the physical policy environment are land use, housing, open space, transportation, and infrastructure. In the social and economic policy environment they are population, social indicators, the economic structure including labor market and the changing structure of jobs, and fiscal analysis.

take place.

Several social and physical policy trends which structure the school system have been highlighted by this comprehensive policy analysis:

- A shift in the fundamental structure of the American economy of which a revitalized Stamford has been a leading indicator
- A transformation from a town which encompasses a series of neighborhoods to an urban community with a wide range of living styles and a potential for a vibrant urban life
- A sudden spurt of urban planning problems, e.g., a shift in land use to corporate office space; a change in residential construction to multi-family dwellings, primarily condominiums; a tight, expensive housing market; a dramatic increase in commuters into the city; a switch in retail trade from local to regional shopping which lead to a new visual profile - exciting, but congested
- A sound municipal fiscal base, but with an erosion of public support for education

In concert with these contextual trends, there have been significant changes in the policies which frame this city. Fundamental shifts in land use and its concurrent shifts in the economic and residential structure are buttresses by municipal planning and zoning policies as well as key decisions by the private sector. Advances in educational technology and basic changes in federal and state roles in education, and a spurt in the growth of private schools, are some of the policies which impact upon the future of public education. These changes in policy have also been documented in the study and have been examined for their impact on public education through a series of scenario analyses. Stamford is changing and this change can be an exciting opportunity for planning and directing the future of the schools.

In response to these changes, the major policy question becomes, "What are the priorities that the Stamford Public Schools should address in revising its educational thrust to meet the demands of the year 2000?" The answer to this issue will enable the Stamford Public Schools to move forward in a policy directed fashion, to prepare its citizens to be functioning adults in the American economy in the year 2000, and to remain an educational leader in the nation.

The Study Team would like to extend its appreciation to Dr. Jerome B. Jones, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Norman Walsh, Assistant Superintendent for Research and Development; Mr. Alan Grafton, Assistant Superintendent; and their administrative staffs. Most particularly, we want to thank the members of the Stamford Educational Planning Committee for their assistance in a close working relationship. I would also like to gratefully acknowledge the commitment and work of the Study Team, and especially the research staff: Ms. Betsy Fobert, Chief Planner; Ms. Doris Minor; Ms. Lia Vasconcelos; Ms. Joanne Cassulo; Ms. Deborah Kupa; Ms. Linda Louro; Ms. Jeanne Devine; and Ms. Gloria Abrams.

Marcia Marker Feld, Ph.D.

Study Director

INTRODUCTION

The future of the Stamford Public Schools must be both responsive and directive; responsive to the needs and wishes of the community and directive in leading students toward the goals of effective citizens, consumers, and workers. This is a time of transition for the Stamford Public Schools, a time to chart a new course as a response to new challenges.

This report is an outcome of an intensive year long study by a team of interdisciplinary professionals and a broad-based community group, the Stamford Educational Planning Committee. The team's goal was to examine trends and proposed policy changes in the environment and to ascertain their effect upon public education in Stamford. During the course of this study, meetings were held with hundreds of individuals - parents, teachers, students, community leaders, businessmen, and public and private sector managers - and mail surveys with follow-up interviews were conducted. In addition, the professional/community team met monthly to discuss the findings and their implications.

Over the past twenty years many changes have occurred in the social, economic, and physical environment in Stamford. The transformation from a town into an urban community has brought a shift in land use to corporate office space; an increase in the construction of multifamily dwellings, primarily condominiums; a tight, expensive housing market; a dramatic increase in commuters into the city; a switch in retail trade from local to regional shopping; and the erosion of public support for education.

Trends in the national economy have also impacted the city. The new thrust of the American economy is complex and, as yet, not fully understood by economists,

sociologists, and planners. However, some startling indicators have emerged: there is strong unemployment among blue collar workers and less unemployment in finance, technology, management, and information transfer. There are significant changes in family patterns, with a shift from the extended family to the nuclear family, and now to single-parent families.

This comprehensive planning and policy study explores these major changes and their impact on the future of the city's school system. Its results are a sense of direction for the community and the schools, an identification of the specified target populations for future school enrollment, and some indication of policy options for the public schools. The next step, to be undertaken by the Stamford Public Schools, will be the development of curriculum and programs which respond to these trends.

Yet, it is essential that the recommendations developed for 1990 and the year 2000 be monitored, reevaluated, and revised as new information develops and new initiatives are completed.

Policy Framework

Educational goals and policy assumptions provided the policy framework for the study. In its development the professional/community team utilized the values, goals, and aspirations of the school system, its Board, its staff, its students, and the larger community as its criteria. The educational goals and policy assumptions which follow were identified initially in meetings with the Stamford Educational Planning Committee, members of the Stamford Board of Education, Stamford teachers, administrators, parents, and community members. They were then examined and revised after a review of the Stamford School System Planning Reports for the last five years. Finally, they were documented at meetings held in September and October 1982, through the subcommittee reports of the Educational Planning Committee presented in October, and in a presentation to

the Board of Education.

The educational goals are to maximize cost-effective, desegregated, quality education in an optimum learning environment and to prepare students to function successfully as citizens, family members, parents, workers, and consumers. The policy assumptions are:

- reasonable and equitable racial balance
- academic balance and feeder pattern continuity
- student access to appropriate educational programs
- safe, sound, and environmentally fit facilities
- adequate space and resources for advanced curriculum
- provision of orderly and timely reduction of surplus capacity
- maximization of quality educational experience
- provision of services to meet the needs of all students in the school system, reduction of out-of-school placements
- minimization of student disruption by continuity through the grades in the same school
- minimization of social/neighborhood disruption
- preservation of neighborhood orientation
- provision of equitable distribution and cost efficient transportation

The framing of these goals and objectives is based upon the understanding that the school system serves a diverse population. Educational programming should maximize benefits resulting from this population by bringing students together in a learning process which includes a focus on post-secondary employment, technical and trade schools, and college and professional schools.

Not all of these policy assumptions can be met equally. For example, the policy assumption that neighborhood orientation should be preserved may be in-

compatible with criteria of academic balance and feeder pattern continuity. The largest number of minority students do not reside near the newer and structurally flexible facility. These students are located in only a few of the study neighborhoods. Despite this situation, the assumptions can be implemented as part of school policy once discussion of the pros and cons of each, and the trade-offs involved in the implementation of each have taken place.

However, some of the policy assumptions, if agreed upon, will not conflict. For example, the commitment to student access to an appropriate educational program and the need for a safe, sound, and environmentally fit facility can be paired with providing for an orderly and timely reduction of surplus capacity.

While these assumptions are complex, it is time for decisions to be made. Stamford is in a transition phase and needs leadership to determine the direction of its schools and to build upon the system's strong elements - the programs that are working, the appropriate curriculum, the special school programs, and the commitment of its teachers, administrators, students, and parents. This will enable Stamford to meet its goal of maximizing cost-effective, desegregated, quality education in an optimum learning environment while providing for change with a minimum of disruption for students.

The Study Team's planning and policy process designed to accomplish the goals and objectives of this study is based upon the concept of the role of the school in the community; the supportive nature and the influence that each has upon the other. The school is often an anchor for the community, providing a central focus and stability in the environment. It is a symbol of local governance in New England as well as that of neighboring areas, and is, in fact, central to the growth and learning of children and their families. The school has played these roles in the historical development of this country. It is the mechanism by which local and national social policy has been implemented -

whether that policy be for a literate people, for an industrializing new republic, or an integrated society for a stable democracy. Most importantly, the school, its staff, and the parents provide the learning environment for the students.

Concurrent with this concept of the role of the school in the Study Team's approach is the sense that education policy planning, to be useful, must be comprehensive in scope and focus on a multiplicity of issues and information, all within the context of the educational system's response to the needs of the students. The key concept underlying this approach lies in the understanding of the interrelationships of elements within the policy environment which comprise a community: population, land use, economic structure, housing, transportation, fiscal structure, and physical infrastructure. All of which are constrained by governmental structure and by the policies and behavior of the private sector.

The approach in the Public Policy Impact Study has been to utilize a number of different planning techniques including goals analysis, needs assessment, fiscal consequences, and scenario analysis. The key to this process is its iterative nature; that is, once the criteria for the decision are established, the process is repeated and each criterion or decision factor is further refined. At some point in the process, some decision weights were given to the policy assumptions which are stated by the Stamford School Board, the Educational Planning Committee, and the community.

In this study, the trends and proposed policy changes in the environment were examined to ascertain their effect upon public education in Stamford. An assessment of these changes utilizes as its criteria the values, goals, and aspirations of the school system, its Board, staff, and students, along with the larger community.

Included in the activities undertaken to complete this study are:

- an examination of educational policy trends and their implications for Stamford
- an assessment of the city's Master Plan and its amendments through an examination of its holding capacity study to gauge the impact of its policies upon the school system
- a housing market analysis which studied the re-use potential of the current housing stock to identify areas where upgrading of zoning may increase or decrease the total population
- a determination of the cost of housing for renters and owners
- an examination of the labor markets operating in Stamford for their effect upon the school system in terms of their dependent impact upon the housing market and the municipal finance system as well as their impact upon educational programs, services, and facilities
- an evaluation of the municipal fiscal environment in the city by comparing the relative cost of educating students in Stamford to other municipal services, by measuring the amounts expended on education in Stamford against other cities and towns, and by assessing the quality of educational outcomes (see Figure i-One)
- a forecast of the demand for public educational services needed to prepare Stamford students to function successfully in the work force
- an assessment of the school system's present strengths, weaknesses, and problems

Phases of the Study

As indicated in Table i-One, this comprehensive policy and planning study is comprised of two phases, each with three stages. In Phase One, Impact Analysis, three activities were completed. During Stage One, data was collected on the

Figure i-One

Analysis

Identification of Critical Public Policy Impact Elements

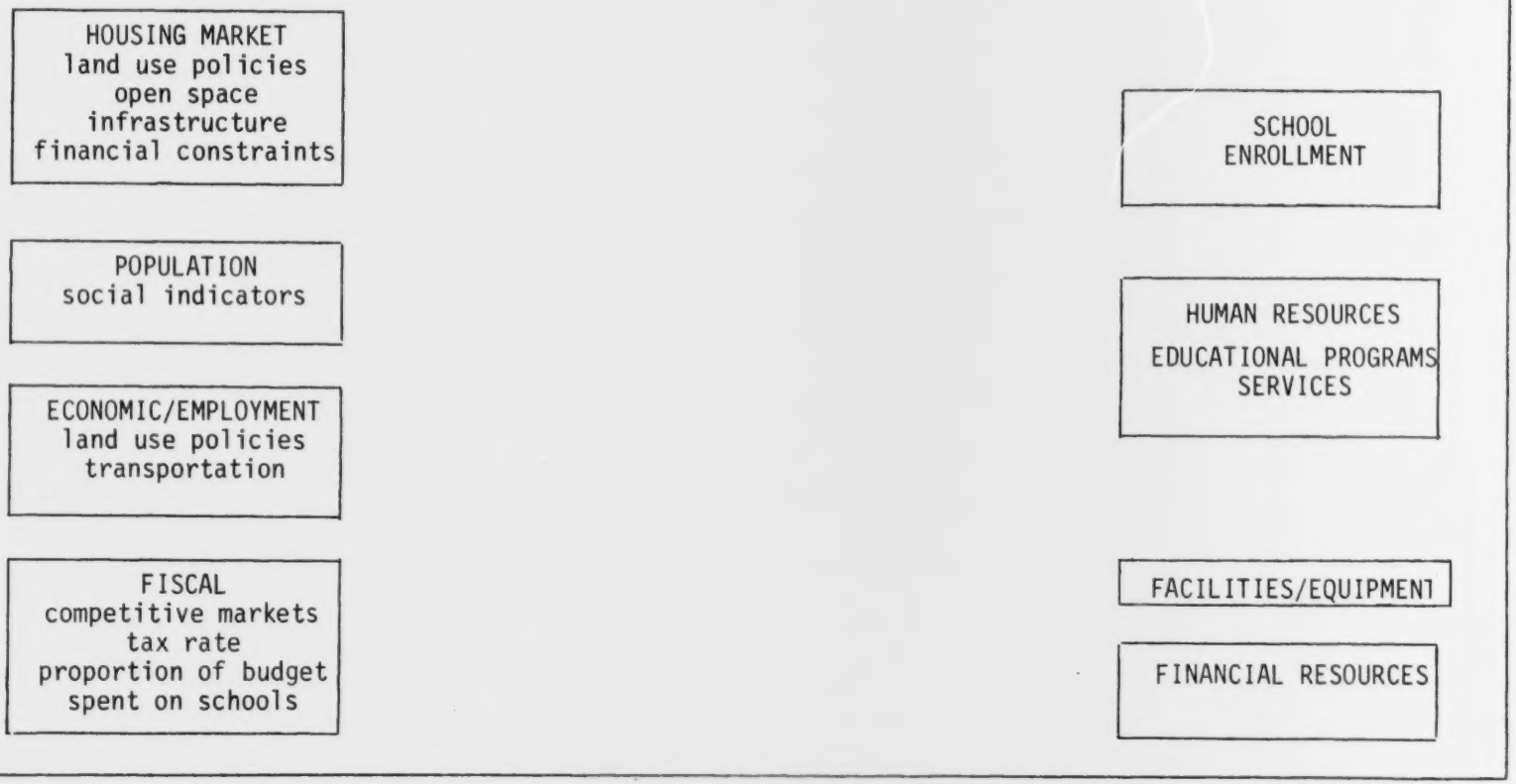

Table i-One
Study Components

PHASE ONE: IMPACT ANALYSIS			PHASE TWO: SCENARIO ANALYSIS		
Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three	Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three
Issue Analysis, Data Collection, Analysis and Projection	Policy Assessment	Discrepancy Analysis	Intensive Impact/ Issue Analysis	Scenario Analysis	Final Report
- Population - Social data - Land use - Housing - Open lands - Transportation - Environment - Economic - Labor market - Occupation - Fiscal	- Assess educational policy trends - Public vs. private schools - Role of federal government - Role of state - City of Stamford Master Plan and Amendments - Zoning and subdivision codes - STEP	- Forecast the demand by stratified characteristics for educational services - Coordinate with Educational Committee study of community values, aspirations, and ideals about education	- Assess school system's present strengths, weaknesses, and problems in light of demand projections - Develop a social indicator model to assist in the identification of student needs	- Forecast and analyze the impact of the trends in Phase I on the future of public education - Assess the impact on enrollment, education program and services, fiscal resources, facilities, and relationships with other agencies	- Review all series of status reports - Develop a final report highlighting the information base and the findings - Provide a foundation for public policy decisions - Meet with appropriate decision makers to indicate how this report can be utilized to develop strategies of implementation

urban systems of the social policy environment, i.e., population, social indicators, the economic structure and the fiscal analysis, and the urban systems of the physical policy environment, i.e., land use, housing, open space, transportation, and infrastructure. The information was analyzed and used as the basis for projections in these areas for the years 1990 and 2000.

In Phase One, Stage Two, educational policy changes occurring throughout the country were examined. Among the issues reviewed were public support for education, school finance reform policies, the changing role of the federal government in education, the increasing popularity of private schools, and the emergence of instructional technologies. The impact of these trends on the Stamford Public Schools were assessed.

In Phase One, Stage Three, studies were completed which forecast the demand in magnitude, scope, and character for the public educational services needed to prepare students in Stamford to function successfully as citizens, family members, parents, workers, and consumers; which assess the school system's strengths, weaknesses, and problems that need to be considered in meeting projected demands for services; and which analyze the impact of the changes forecast in the environment upon the future of public education in Stamford prepared in collaboration with the Stamford Public Schools and the Stamford Educational Planning Committee.

Phase Two, Scenario Analysis, consisted of three stages: Issue Analysis, Scenario Analysis, and Final Report. The first stage, Issues Analysis, began with an assessment of a primary source of information: an exchange process with the public relying on an understanding of the goals and objectives, and issues and concerns about the Stamford Public Schools. These exchanges represent one component of the broader consultation process, which is a means of identifying

the views of relevant individuals and groups through a series of interviews and discussions, utilized in this comprehensive planning and policy study.

The consultation model is a planning mechanism for encouraging citizen participation in the process of making decisions on critical issues facing a city or a community. The goals of the process in this study are to identify issues and perspectives on the future of the Stamford Public Schools and to inform individuals about the project and its goals.

During the consultation process a significant amount of information was collected. This data was analyzed in an ongoing manner to allow the Study Team to utilize the information in the development of the scenario analyses. A list of key issues, which are presented in Chapter III in Volume I, were compiled and categorized at the conclusion of this activity.

In reviewing the direction of educational priorities for Stamford, information other than that gathered in the consultation process was examined and utilized. The additional sources tapped were SAT student interest data and several recent reports on career education in Stamford. Their importance lies in the identification of specific career clusters which may be appropriate for the secondary schools in the city and in the assessment of earlier labor market information.

In the second stage of Phase Two, a set of scenario analyses, viewing the future of Stamford in two modes, was developed. The first assumes that all current trends will continue. What will happen if, in fact, no changes in public policy are made, nor significant changes within the private sector occur? The second scenario introduces the probable impacts of the proposed Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance as these might affect Stamford's growth, and thus, its educational system.

Phase Two culminates in the final report, a four volume series of which this is the first. The data and findings revealed in this report provide a foundation upon which the Stamford Public Schools can make informed decisions regarding educational policy.

Final Report

During the conduct of this study twelve working papers were issued. A list of titles and their dates of publication are offered in Appendix A. In preparing the final report these papers were compiled into four volumes. Each must be read in context with the other volumes and the subcommittee reports of the Educational Planning Committee. Together, these works assess the implications of the current trends and policies in the social and physical policy environments for the future of public education in Stamford.

Volume I presents a summative view of the study. It documents the impact of the future direction of policy trends upon the educational programs and services of the Stamford Public Schools. Volume II reviews the social and physical policy environment within which the public education system operates. It describes existing trends and conditions, and examines areas where their impact is potentially the strongest. Volume III examines the educational policy changes that are occurring throughout the country. It discusses the impact of these trends on the future of public education in Stamford. Volume IV introduces a Facilities Utilization Plan for the Stamford Public Schools.

Volume III[1]

Volume III, which is divided into two chapters, addresses the issues and trends in the educational policy environment. Chapter I examines the educational

---

[1] Barbara Brauner Berns, Educational Planner, is the author of Volume III.

policy changes that are occurring throughout the country, e.g., the lack of support for public education, adjustments in school finance reform policies, the changing role of the federal government, the increasing popularity of the private school sector, and the emergence of educational technologies and assesses their impact on the future of public education in Stamford.

Chapter II offers a more in-depth view of the role of private schools in educating American youth. Data is shared from a recent study of public and private schools; the results of five studies conducted on this topic throughout the country are presented; and the common reasons cited by parents when they transfer their children from public to private schools are identified.

I. TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

In order to assess demographic and economic patterns in the Stamford area, it is important to examine educational policy changes that are occurring throughout the country. These educational policies and trends include public support for education, school finance reform policies, the changing role of the federal government in education, and the increasing popularity of the private school sector. The emerging impact of instructional technologies, such as those brought about by the computer revolution and cable TV, upon curriculum and instruction concerns is explored. This chapter examines these trends (see Table I-One) and then assesses their impact upon the future of public education in Stamford.

Public Support for Education

The 1960s were characterized by increased enrollment for public schools and strong political support for education. The 1970s, on the other hand, experienced decreasing enrollment patterns and an eroding support for the schools. This has taken place within the context of a national economy with serious problems.

In spite of the changing environment for education in the 1970s, the public education finance system grew and expansive programs for students with various special needs were developed.

Trends affecting support of and opinion towards schools. Enrollment decline occurred nationally in the 1980s, but every state and city experienced their own configuration of change. Census projections indicate, however, that the demographic trends will continue through the 1980s with the 1990s demonstrating stabilization in enrollment with some possible growth. Until the mid-1980s

we can expect a decrease in the school age population (5-17 year-olds); in the last half of the decade, we can expect a slight increase. High school enrollments will decline during the 1980s with elementary enrollments rising in the late 1980s. It is important to note that during this latter period, there is an anticipated increase in the under 5 year-old population which might reverse the enrollment decline.

Throughout the 1980s, there will be an increase in the population over age 65 and an increase in persons between the ages of 18 and 44. This is particularly significant because the first group requires an increase in elderly services, while the second group traditionally supports the schools.

A key projection is that minority students (5-17 year-olds) will be increasing throughout the 1980s, while the total enrollment will be decreasing. In addition, there will be a rise in the number of students from low-income families.

Data on private school enrollment in the future years is incomplete, but the National Center for Education Statistics forecasts a rise in such enrollment. Given an overall decline in public school growth, the percentage of non-public enrollment will increase. It is important that the impact of this analysis on the growing support for the private sector in the 1980s is recognized.

In terms of regional growth, the West and Southwest are predicted to grow, while a continued decline is forecasted for the Northeast. Connecticut, in particular, is expected to decline (-.5 percent or more) in the 1980s with a slight decline (-4.9 percent to -2.9 percent) from 1985 to 2000. The School Finance Project of the U.S. Department of Education indicates that Connecticut will have medium competition for revenues by the year 2000 with low support for public schools in both 1990 and 2000.

Discussion of public support for education. The demographic projections summarized above indicate that there will be great shifts away from the political

support for education that existed in the 1960s and the decreasing, but still basic, support for public schools that existed in the 1970s. The 1980s will be marked by a situation in which there will be a decrease in the number of individuals with a direct interest in the schools and an increase in the over 65 age group. It is particularly noteworthy that a large proportion of individuals with an interest in the schools will be those from families of low-income and minority status - those who traditionally have not been active in the political process. The impact of the growing senior citizen population is perhaps even more critical; it accounts for a large group who may vote against education budget increases and school construction and renovation.

Trends in public support for education have been documented for the past decade. From 1967-1977, there has been an 11 percent decrease nationally in approval rates for school bond elections. In the interim between 1974-1978, 50 percent less of the Gallup Poll respondents believed schools were doing an "A" grade when asked to rate performance from A to F. In each of those years, fewer persons reported that the schools were either excellent or above average.

There continues to be competition for the support essential to maintain key services in a city or town. This competition has become very intense, particularly in light of property tax issues. In late 1978, the Education Commission of the States found that public schools were always ranked, along with police, fire, and sanitation, as the essential services.

In general, there is a poor outlook for public support for education. This will be affected by the types of school finance policies that are implemented; the role played by the federal government; the role that emerges for the private school sector; and the organizational and political abilities of the various educational groups, constituents, and coalitions.

Table I-One
Educational Policy Trends: Diagrammatic Schema

Public Support for Education

- Decrease in number of individuals with interest in schools
- Increase in over 65 age group
- Possible increase in persons 18-44

Role of Federal Government

- Deregulation
- Elimination of categorical programs
- Elimination of U.S. Department of Education
- Tuition tax credits
- Voucher systems

Emerging Educational Issues

- Technology (computer)
- Technology (cable TV)
- Shortage of science and math teachers
- Minimal competency
- Teacher competency and licensing
- Secondary schools
- Changing student/parent population

School Finance Reform Policies

- State support
- State general aid formulas
- Financing basic quality education
- Special education
- Tax structure changes

Increasing Popularity of Private Schools

- Increase in students
- Transfers
- Student outcomes

School Finance Reform Policies

The period of the 1970s was marked by changes in the source of fiscal support for education, specifically between local and state funding. The local portion of educational funding declined throughout the decade; state support increased. There are indications that this trend will continue. Federal funding, which remained at about 8 percent in the 1970s, is predicted to decrease in the 1980s.

Discussion of finance policies. There are a variety of financial policies that have been established during the past ten years. Each brings its unique set of consequences to the respective local educational system. Each has its own set of assumptions, specific regulations, and approaches. For purposes of organization and simplicity, the major policies are summarized according to categories developed for a national survey in 1979 by the Education Commission of the States.

- Alternative Systems of State Support

  Some examples include tax credits, vouchers, state funding for private schools and support for education for children under 5 years of age. The main policy issue is who should receive state education and how the state support should be distributed.

- Basic Changes in State General Aid Formulas

  The most significant policy issue in this area is the level of state support, followed by pupil weighting techniques and the fiscal impacts of declining enrollments. Other concerns include extra support for school districts with special characteristics and basic structural changes in the equalization approach.

- Financing Basic Education and Quality Education

In some parts of the country, there is discussion about limiting state support to basic education. In some states, there is emphasis on teacher and/or pupil competency testing. There have been small efforts to relate quality with state support.

- Support for Special Education

There has been extensive federal funding for poverty students, low achieving students, bilingual students, handicapped students, and gifted and talented students. As school systems shift fiscal responsibilities to the state level, policies must take into account these different categories of students and whether or not their needs require variations in type of support.

- Changes in Tax Structure for Education

The principal policy issue in this strategy is raising revenues rather than their distribution. The reduction of property taxes is critical with the following issues being considered: implementation of circuit breaker mechanisms; implementation of tax rate roll-back provision; use of local school district sales or income taxes; statewide property assessment; and a statewide property taxation. Most recently, the issue of tax limitation has received attention and political support. Among all levels of policymakers and teachers across the country, there is agreement that the level of taxation, particularly property taxation, needs to be reduced, but there is uncertainty as to how it is to be replaced.

- Other policies

There is growing interest in transportation, energy costs, teacher retirement systems, capital outlay and debt service. Among these issues, transportation and teacher retirement systems appear most significant.

Analysis of policies. All these policies are important to those involved with education decision making. The survey conducted in 1979, and referred to previously in this section, demonstrated that the four broad policy issues for the 1980s include improving taxpayer and school finance equity; providing support for programs that serve special student populations or special needs of school districts; promoting choice through finance structures for education; and concentrating support on basic education.

Role of the Federal Government in Education

Historical role of the federal government. The role of the federal government in education can be traced back two hundred years. Generally the role has taken three forms: to assure equal educational opportunity; to enhance the quality of education; and to provide general financial assistance to local education agencies. From the period beginning in the late 1910s through the period of the late 1950s, the federal presence in education was exhibited through the early Vocational Education Act, the School Lunch Act, and the Impact Aid Act. Each of these acts provided definite education-related services and, at the same time, met the federal government's priorities in areas outside of education. For example, while the School Lunch Program improved the nourishment of low-income youngsters, it also encouraged the purchase of surplus commodities, thereby improving agricultural policy.

During the next decade, a series of additional educational programs were designed and funded by the federal government: the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958; the Vocational Education Act (1963); and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965. An aggressive federal civil rights policy was also established in 1964 through the Civil Rights Act. As in the prior period of history, the federal government supported key educational activities which also met other national concerns. A most illustrative

example is the ESEA Title I program which brings remedial services to disadvantaged children, while, at the same time, meeting the nation's unemployment problems caused by educational deprivation and poverty.

ESEA was probably the major aid program produced by the federal government. It contained a number of programs to assist state and local education agencies and to enrich their educational programs. Some popular programs were directed at libraries and instructional materials, innovative programs, and research. All programs stressed the quality of education.

As the years proceeded, the role of the federal government continued in these areas. There has been growing recognition of the strong relationship between education and equal opportunity. The federal government supported grant-in-aid programs which resulted in the Bilingual Education Act, the Emergency School Aid Act, and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Since 1965, however, Congress has not provided substantial funding to educational quality as an end; it has passed legislation to support particular curriculum areas including, but not limited to, the arts, health, environment, pre-school services, women's equity, and basic skills. Congress has also authorized programs such as the Indo-China Refugee Assistance Act and the Asbestos School Hazard Detection and Control Act.

The federal programs discussed thus far have been funded through categorical grants. The larger programs have been developed on a local student count formula; the programs which encourage innovation have been funded as discretionary grant programs.

Contemporary role of the federal government. The Reagan administration believes that a change must occur in the federal government's role in education. Prior to assuming the presidency, the Heritage Foundation was commissioned to

conduct an assessment of educational programs, sources, and policies. The Foundation's report contained many recommendations; ultimately, they became the administration's agenda in education.

The federal government's proposed role in education is established under the "New Federalism" umbrella. New Federalism is based on the belief that the federal government should turn back particular responsibilities to the states. The assumptions are that a more efficient system for delivering services is available at the state level, and that greater policy flexibility will be maintained. Hence, in education in 1982, a program modeled on this concept has been put into effect.

The cornerstone of this program is the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (ECIA). The act combines over thirty categorical programs and requires that the state pass through 80 percent of the federal funds to cover these programs. The grouping of these categorical programs has tremendous policy impact; it all but eliminates the various special interest groups and lobbying forces. The local school districts can develop their own allocation procedure for using these monies. The policy implication here is that the federal government is no longer setting educational priorities and is no longer interested in the components that built the blocks of the educational program. The decision making in regard to educational services and activities is not situated at the local level, thereby indicating major philosophical change in educational policy since 1965.

While increased flexibility and autonomy had been requested for years by educators on all levels, there was an understanding that appropriate funding would be forwarded from the federal level. This, too, has been altered as the amount of funding for educational purposes has been reduced substantially. The

reasons cited for budget cuts have been the increasing needs of the military/defense establishment and the tremendous national debt. This justification allows decreases in educational funding to accompany the change in allocation procedures established by the consolidation process.

A third shift in the federal government's role in education is the repeated attempts to abolish the Department of Education. As destruction of categorical programs has eliminated external constituent groups, destruction of the Department assures that there will be no advocates for educational matters within the administration. Abolition of the Secretary's position means that no Cabinet member will speak out for public education; soon, there will be even less support for public schools.

The last, and perhaps most severe change for education is the administration's active stand concerning private schools. For the second year in a row, there is a strong push for tuition tax credits for parents with students in private or parochial institutions. The administration suggests parental choice of their children's education is critical, and there appears to be accessible funding to support such tax credits. There is an underlying message that the private sector is better able to design and implement quality, cost-effective educational programs and services.

The major changes in the federal role include consolidation leading to priority-setting at the local level; decreased funding for public education; elimination of the Department of Education; and aggressive support for private schools. Underlying these alterations is the assumption that monies are better needed for other governmental services and that the public schools have not been doing their job. The message that this new role brings to educators, parents, and students throughout the nation cannot be overstated.

Increasing Popularity of the Private School Sector

As stated above, the federal government is actively supporting the private school sector through an aggressive "push" for tuition tax credits. There has been a minimal amount of research and literature on the performance of private schools, particularly in relation to public education.

The National Center for Educational Statistics sponsored a survey of private elementary and secondary schools in the United States. In 1980-1981, there were 21,000 private schools with 5,029,000 students and 281,000 teachers. The estimate is that one out of every nine students attended a private school. In 1980, 10.9 percent of all students were in private schools; in 1970, the percentage was 10.5.

The number of private schools remained stable or increased slightly in the past decade. The private schools also retained more of their enrollment than did the public schools; the latter's population decreased 10.7 percent, whereas the former's decreased only 6.4 percent.

It is significant to note that 77 percent of the private schools are affiliated with religious groups. Catholic schools are largest in number and in size of enrollment.

The major study to date, and the largest survey of nonpublic schools ever conducted by the federal government, was written by the sociologist, James Coleman. His major finding, quoted in newspapers across the country, was that students learn more in private and parochial schools than in public ones. Critics state that Dr. Coleman has gone beyond the data in drawing his conclusions. However, his findings are as follows:

- Private schools produce better cognitive outcomes than public schools.
- Private schools provide a safer, more disciplined, and more ordered

environment than do public schools.

- Private schools encourage greater interest in college and lead more students to attend college than do public schools.
- There is more racial segregation in the public schools than in private schools. Moreover, facilitating the use of private schools through tuition tax credits or school vouchers would decrease segregation.
- The public sector shows slightly higher income segregation than either the Catholic or other private sectors.

The criticisms of these findings are as prolific as the study itself. Some of the observations and comments by noted educators are listed below:

- Surveys used in the study did not test students on what they were taught in high school, only what they learned in lower grades.
- The study addressed only some of the high school outcomes; it did not measure any long-term impact.
- The study did not take into consideration differences in student motivation and parental support; it also denied the reality that private schools include only children whom the school selects and/or whose families select the schools.
- The study ignored data by the Congressional Budget Office which documented that children from the wealthiest families are overrepresented in private school populations, and data from the National Assessment of Education Progress that found children from similar family and economic backgrounds perform the same in reading in both public and private schools.

In addition to the Coleman research, there is a growing body of literature and case studies on the private school sector. These materials will be reviewed in Chapter II of this volume.

Emerging Educational Issues in the 1980s

The previous sections have addressed several trends and policies that have great impact on education, yet they originate elsewhere. They are important for review and analysis by educators. However, they must be assessed in conjunction with a number of other issues that are currently emerging within the educational community. These issues are discussed separately in order to provide an overview of the major concerns. However, in reality, they consistently overlap.

Educational technology. There is no greater change in America today than the revolution in computer technology. Computers have been available for use for some time. However, the last five years have particular significance due to the introduction of new informational technologies such as microcomputers, microprocessors, video recording devices, and inexpensive methods of storing and transmitting information. The microcomputer is now the most significant technology affecting changes in education. It is powerful and versatile; it is also fairly inexpensive and easy to program.

Recent surveys indicate that one quarter of all public schools currently have at least one microcomputer for instructional use. Projections show that the number will have doubled by the end of 1982. In fact, by 1990, some experts predict that schools in the United States will offer each student an average of 30 minutes per day at a computer terminal. Others suggest that within ten years computers and video discs will be superior to textbooks. In terms of future careers, it is estimated that by the year 2000 as many as 65 percent of the workers in America will hold jobs that involve the processing and communication of information. By 1990, educators expect that general purpose microcomputers will be commonly used in the home.

With the existence and continued growth of informational technology in

the schools, primarily computers, computer literacy skills for both teachers and students are a necessity. There are several decisions to be made at the start of implementing a computer education program. Examples include the following: Will computers be used to free teachers from routine aspects of teaching? Will they be used for management purposes? Will they be used in the various disciplines to do such things as improve writing skills, simulate scientific experiments, or assist bilingual students in learning English? Will they be used to train students for entry-level jobs or post-secondary education in the high technology employment sector? Who will develop software? Will it be purchased or teacher-developed? Will hardware be leased, purchased, or borrowed from industry?

There is one overriding problem to be faced by local school systems concerning computer education. That problem is whether or how systems can overlap a computer curriculum and in-service education in a time of diminishing financial resources and decreasing public support. This situation is compounded by the fact that the computer revolution brings daily changes, and informed decisions on hardware and software are critical. There must be careful planning, but the luxury of time is unavailable; schools have no choice but to begin preparing students for their fast-approaching future in a technological world.

Cable television is another new technology which daily is becoming important in our homes and schools. Cable is not a new phenomenon. However, until recently, its growth has been slow. In 1971, cable reached only 9 percent of the TV households in the United States; by 1981, the percentage had increased to 25. It is anticipated that by 1985, this will have increased to the 30-40 percent range.

There are excellent opportunities for educational services to be supported by a local cable system. It is important that specific school cable provisions

are included in the local franchise contract and that the school system strongly identify and articulate its interest and commitment to cable.

The types of school services that cable can provide are numerous. There are fundamental cable services such as improved reception, closed circuit channels for school programming, or facilities for adult and community education. There are also cable production services which would include staff paid by the cable company to teach video production skills, equipment and facilities for production and transmission, or facilities that allow experimentation with televised text services. In addition, interactive cable services are possible; examples would be an interactive "institutional network" for teleconferencing and two-way teacher workshops or institutional networks that provide "trips" to cultural and public institutions. All of these services also have the potential for interconnecting with computer terminals and a central computer.

It is essential that educational decision makers be actively involved with the local cable system, and, as in the case of computer education, they address the key issue of the role cable will plan - instruction, management, production, etc.

Shortage of teachers in science and mathematics. Related directly to the Age of Technology is the rapidly increasing loss of science and mathematics teachers at the elementary and secondary school level. Recent reports, as well as documented case studies, indicate that these teachers are being lured away from public education by high technology companies that offer considerable higher salaries, higher social status, and greater opportunities for advancement and mobility. Others are choosing at the college level to study science and mathematics, but do not seriously consider teaching as a viable career option. The result of this situation is obvious. Students in the public schools will be

denied quality education in these areas, thereby decreasing their own alternatives in the future.

There must be policies identified to attack this situation. Some trends have been to increase salaries in these areas, to set up loan programs with industry, and to develop certification programs for teachers with other types of experience and backgrounds. There is a need for creative and comprehensive planning in this area.

Curriculum and instruction concerns. While the impact of technology on education is a critical issue, there are a number of other areas that will be significant during the 1980s. First, basic skills or "minimal competency" has survived the past decade and is a focal point for school systems. Emphasis will continue to be on the fundamental skills of reading, writing, and mathematics. The expectation is that the large number of students with low test scores will decline if effort is concentrated in this area. Second, the quality of teachers will be under rigid examination. This issue of competency-based teacher training is being explored with the goal of making teachers more accountable to student needs. There is also a movement which stresses uniform teacher certification. There is a desire among professional educators to be able to move from state to state without having to become involved in additional licensing procedures. Third, there is a strong interest in improving secondary schools in this country. While the federal role in education is diminishing, the large private foundations have been stepping in around this issue. Both the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Ford Foundation are conducting projects which attempt to reward improvement towards excellence at the secondary level. Fourth, the curriculum and instructional programs of schools must respond to the changing fabric of American society. While the 1980 census

statistics cited elsewhere in this study indicate trends in population by a number of different variables, they are quite consistent with the country's demographics as a whole. A key reality is that the racial balance of cities is changing rapidly; this has implications for desegregation efforts and, ultimately, for curriculum, social, and organizational structures of the various school systems. The rights of handicapped children have also been greatly expanded during the last decade. Recently, the fiscal and civil rights consequences of these rights have emerged as debates focusing upon educational and physical accomodations for the handicapped. Moreover, the bilingual student population has received expanded services due to a 1974 Supreme Court decision,[1] and the policy implications of this situation are a paramount issue for educators. It is estimated that by 1985, the United States will have the fifth largest population of Spanish-speaking people in the Western World, and this has serious implications for public education. Other societal issues which are reflected in public education include the constantly increasing number of mothers who work and, thus, the number of dual career families; and the number of households headed by single females. The necessity of pre-school programs and/or extended day programs is crucial and must be assessed by the educational communities.

Relationship Between National Issues and Trends and Stamford

Having assessed national issues and trends in education, the project staff interviewed key individuals in the Stamford educational community to determine the relevance of these issues to that city. Information was also collected from personnel in the Connecticut Department of Education in order to place these issues in a statewide perspective. All meetings and conversations were semi-structured (see Appendix B for a copy of the Interview Questionnaire and

---

[1] Lau vs. Nichols 414 U.S. 563 (1974)

Appendices C, D, and E for lists of the individuals interviewed).

While there were many issues of concern to educators in Stamford, the overriding one of both short and long-term impact is that of diminishing financial resources. The findings of the consultation process (see Volume I for an in-depth discussion of this process) indicate that the critical policy issues in this area for Stamford's educational community are school finance reforms and the role of the federal government. The underlying element for both of these concerns in the city is public support or the lack of support for education.

Related to the funding issue is an increasing interest and support for private schools. Equally dependent on finance reforms and the role of the federal government are the emerging trends in education - educational technology; teacher shortages; curriculum concerns, such as basic skills; teacher certification/evaluation and secondary school reform; and the response of educational institutions to rapidly changing demographics. The city's response to these trends is largely dependent upon the support for public education in Stamford over the next five years.

In the concluding sections of this chapter each of these issues and trends is discussed in regard to the state and to Stamford, in particular. Additional information is presented on the state and local levels to document the reasons for concern in these areas and to describe, if appropriate, efforts in place to attend to these issues.

School finance policies. There are a number of different finance policies in effect across the country. The most significant issues in Stamford are the level of state support and the equalization approach. Generally, state funding in Connecticut has been at the 5 percent level; it ranks 46th nationally in percentage of monies allocated to local school systems. The major problem

is the lack of a state income tax, so that adequate funds are not generated by the state.

The issue of equalization of school finances is of particular importance. First tried in California, legal suits have been testing the consistency of school finance systems that have relied on land taxes. The suits, which are based on the due process clause, state that students have not been receiving equal education, i.e., richer suburbs have better schools. The response is that the state must establish a scheme to equalize this situation.

In Connecticut, a suit was brought through Horton vs. Mescal which stated that students were being deprived of their rights for an equal education. The result was to direct the state to develop a formula for distribution on the basis of need. This formula takes into account such characteristics as the number of disadvantaged students, wealth of the community, etc. The formula (known as GTB) is a fairly complicated process. It does not generate additional funds; it only alters the pattern of allocation.

There appears to be strong recognition across Connecticut that the state finance policies must be changed in order to increase revenues and improve equalization. Various professional organizations are pushing for such changes and there are different strategies on the drawing board.

Role of federal government in education. The state support for education in Stamford is minimal, and the proportion of funds from the federal government is also quite low. In fact, Stamford has been 2-3 percent below the 6 percent average quoted often in national statistics for federal support for education. Thus, the decrease in federal funds to Connecticut and ultimately to Stamford creates an even smaller allocation of federal monies at a time when the city's need is the greatest.

Title I, the cornerstone education program of ESEA (now labeled "Chapter I" of the Educational Consolidation and Improvement Act), has been reduced statewide by one third. Stamford has not yet received definite figures due to the present national controversy over the use of 1970 or 1980 census figures, but a reduction in funds is anticipated.

Chapter II of the new act is a block grant incorporating thirty diverse categorical programs. Connecticut's share of these monies was decreased by 40 percent and Stamford's allocation will be modest. The state's block grant monies will be divided as follows: 80 percent will be given to local school systems; 15 percent will remain at the state level; and 5 percent will fund competitive grants. Personnel at the Connecticut Department of Education believe that the federal government will have less of a role in setting educational policy and in allocating funds. However, the state will continue to implement federal restrictions and regulations in the next school year.

The issue of tuition tax credits is an area of interest and emphasis for the federal government. The pattern of private school enrollment in Connecticut has been consistent over the past decade, with the private school experiencing decline similar to the public school enrollment. The tuition tax credits legislation in Congress today would provide tax relief to the working families of nonpublic school students, and could alter the pattern of private school enrollment.

The voucher system approach for education, advocated by groups within the federal education network as another option for parents to exercise in school selection, has had little interest or support in Connecticut or in Stamford.

Public support for education in Stamford. The issue of public support for

education is ambiguous at best. In prior years, Stamford residents (as individuals and members of various community boards) strongly provided the local monies that were believed to be essential for a quality school system. During the current budget process, there was evidence that strong financial support for the public schools was no longer a "given". In fact, the proposed operating budget of $55,557, 689 for school year 1982-1983 was transformed into an actual operating budget of $51,757,689 by the Board of Representatives.

The reasons for a severe reduction in the public education budget (and, ultimately, the negative impact on curriculum and instruction) are complex. Basically, the monies to fund all city services are no longer available at the high levels of previous years. There are more competing interests; each has an interest group with needs to be met. The needs of the public school sector, or the articulation of these needs, did not appear to decision makers to match those put forth by the other groups. A variety of responses to the decreased support are given. They range from those who feel the community has been very supportive; to those who resent costs for special education and gifted children; and to those who feel the schools and student population have changed "too much."

National trends in public support for education identified a key trend toward a decrease in the school age population (5-17 year-olds), at least until the mid-1980s and an increase in the 65 year or older population. As documented in that report, this is particularly significant because the latter provides pressure for elderly services - often at the expense of services for students. The meetings of the Board of Representatives concerning public education resounded with many dialogues concerning this issue.

Another national trend affecting support for public schools is the changing

demographic situation, i.e., the increase in minority students and students from low-income families. Stamford, according to population projections, will face this situation in future years. The concern is that parents of minority and low-income students have historically been the least represented in either advocacy or decision-making positions and groups.

In addition to parent support of public education, it is important to gain support of corporate and community institutions. Corporations have been involved with the Stamford Public Schools. However, this has occurred on an "as needed" basis - field trips, a speaker series, small grants. A more comprehensive collaborative arrangement, now in beginning stages, is essential if public support is to be stimulated. In a city like Stamford, corporate support will be crucial to maintain the quality of public education.

Private school support. The policies described above have direct and indirect consequences upon the status of private school education statewide and in Stamford. Nationally, the number of private schools has remained stable or increased slightly in the past decade. In Stamford today, there are eighteen nonpublic schools. According to the school department statistics, 16 percent of the K-6 students (1,229) attend private schools; twenty-one percent of the students in grades 7-8 (536) attend private schools; and 17 percent of the grade 9-12 students (958) attend private schools. The proportion of minority students attending private schools is considerably less: 8 percent for K-6; 6 percent for grades 7-8; and 5 percent for grades 9-12. With the exception of the Murphy attendance area, the proportion of majority students is much larger than the number of minority students. There are differences in attendance at private schools by race among the various attendance areas.[2]

---

[2]These statistics exclude students in Special Education, Bilingual Education, Home Instruction, the Alternative High School, or those attending "unspecified private schools."

Total state figures for Stamford are a little higher due to inclusion of pre-kindergarten, post-graduate, and special education; the state reports approximately 21.3 percent of the student population attends nonpublic schools. Even this higher of the two percentages is lower than that of the communities of Ansonia, Bridgeport, Greenwich, New Britain, Norfolk, Prospect, Salisbury, Sprague, and Waterbury. The average state percent for nonpublic school attendance is 13.7 percent.

It is evident from conversations with Stamford educators that private school attendance has remained consistent over the years. State education personnel report a similar pattern, and add that private schools have been experiencing an enrollment decline similar to the public schools.

In spite of what the statistics show, there is very real concern among long-time school supporters about the exit of Stamford public school students and families to private schools in the area. Many interviews and meetings conducted during this study focused on the anecdotes and personal experiences relating to "leaving the public schools." While miscellaneous reasons were cited, a common element seemed to be that "there's not much left for the average child." It was also suggested that the recent budget reductions in local support for education might be the final push for families in the midst of deciding whether or not to seek admission for their children in private schools. The loss of federal funds and the possible financial incentives via tuition tax credits might contribute to altering the pattern of private school enrollment in Stamford. This is an area that must be monitored closely.

Emerging educational issues. As the debate continues about finance policies, the role of the federal government in education, and public versus private support for education, the day-to-day business of educating students continues.

In a school system like Stamford, professional educators keep abreast of emerging educational trends in curriculum, instruction, and management, and develop plans and programs that bring these concerns and/or innovations to Stamford. The areas highlighted in this report are educational technology (computers and cable); teacher shortages in science and mathematics; and a myriad of issues that can best be categorized as curriculum and instruction.

The revolution in computer technology is the single greatest change in the country today. The Connecticut State Board of Education has recognized the potential role of computers and on November 5, 1981, adopted a policy statement including an acknowledgement of the computer as a "problem-solving tool as well as a medium of instruction." The statement addresses the necessity for secondary school students to graduate "with an understanding of the scope, potential, and importance of computer technology in their adult lives." While the Board neither mandates programs nor sets aside funds for computer education projects, it does commit itself to support to and assistance for school districts in the "development and implementation of the computer in the instructional program and to promote cooperative efforts among educators, government, and business and industry..."

Recently, every school system in Connecticut was surveyed to assess how extensively computers were used across the state. While the state report will not be complete until this fall, it is anticipated that Fairfield County will show good access to computers by their students.

Stamford has been actively involved in computer education through CAI (Computer Assisted Instruction) and computer literacy. The school system has purchased hardware and software, and has initiated pilot programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. After school computer clubs have also been established. In addition to educating students and providing in-

service for teachers, there is a research and development component as well.

Stamford has a concern about providing equal access to computers. However, students in all schools do not presently have the opportunity to participate in the computer education program. The school district is also faced with a lack of financial resources to strengthen and expand the program appropriately. Support for computer education must be built among teachers, and funding must be sought from the corporate sector.

Related directly to advances in technology, primarily computers, is the rapid loss of science and mathematics teachers at the elementary and secondary school level. A 1980 survey of 44 states indicated that 28 states had a shortage in mathematics and, in 16 states, this was a critical situation. In 1981-1982, there were severe teaching shortages in the areas of physics, earth sciences, and chemistry. Teachers in biology and general science are still available.

Connecticut is aware of this trend, and finds parallels in its own state. In 1980-1981, the fourteen teacher education institutions in Connecticut had 57 individuals apply for science certificates and 70 provisional certificates were awarded. it is also significant that not all teacher candidates receiving a provisional certificate will teach.

In Connecticut, a study was conducted on the demand for science teachers. Fifty-eight school districts and eleven private schools demonstrated a decrease in the number of science teachers due to retirement (1.5 percent), layoff (2.2 percent), and resignation for business and industry (3.5 percent). The major difficulty is in securing teachers of physics, chemistry, and general science, thereby reflecting the national trend. The response of school districts has been to drop courses (7 percent) or hire substitutes on a long-term basis (26 percent). The number of new teachers hired has not been high. It is

also interesting to note that the average age of teachers in science is increasing; in Connecticut it is between 39 and 42. It appears that younger people are not entering this field, and layoffs, when they occur, affect the newer teachers.

The teacher shortage is becoming noticeable at this point and, if it is not reversed, will have an impact on the quality of education students receive in science and mathematics.

During the 1980s a number of areas in curriculum and instruction were identified as noteworthy. First, basic skills or "minimal competency" has become an integral core of education for the state and city; it will continue to be so. Funds from the state for remediation have been critical to successful implementation of basic skills plans.

Second, an assessment of the quality of teachers has become very important. Recently, a bill was submitted to the Connecticut legislature for testing teachers to determine competency. While this bill did not pass, it is symbolic of the move at all levels to ascertain the quality of teaching personnel. In response to the strong interest by various groups in this issue, the State Department of Education has developed a comprehensive plan for teacher certification. The plan, among other things, attempts to recruit high caliber individuals to teaching; to test new teachers in basic skills; and to establish certification and evaluation procedures.

Connecticut has teacher evaluation legislation in effect which, on July 1, 1972, became the first such law in the nation. The purpose of such evaluation, according to the law, is improvement of the student learning experience. It is a goal-oriented approach and the local district develops its own education goals. A fiscal support system is in place to assist districts in planning

and conducting the evaluation.

As follow-up to the guidelines of the law, the Board adopted a plan (see above) that is aimed at improving staff development and teacher training programs. The next year, the Board adopted a Plan for Professional Development which included some forty activities. More recently (April, 1981), the Board requested that the Professional Development Council recommend action regarding competency testing of new teachers and continuing certification of practicing teachers. The school district of Stamford is affected by all of these state-initiated processes.

Third, there is strong interest at the national level in secondary schools and programs that respond to the changing demographics in American life. Stamford is examining these two areas in great depth through the work of the Educational Planning Committee. Its findings and reports will be issued separately and will address these most significant issues.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the national policy trends from a statewide and citywide perspective. The national picture appears to parallel the situation in Connecticut and Stamford; there is agreement that these patterns will move through the 1980s with public education.

The key issue is a new school finance policy for Connecticut and Stamford. It is clear that, without adequate funding, there will be no way to meet the needs of a technological world which will be inhabited by a diverse group of people.

II. PRIVATE SCHOOL CONCERNS

For the past ten years, there has been an increasing interest in the role of private schools in educating American youth. During this period, dissatisfaction with public schools has been widely publicized and the migration of students and families to private education has been of great concern. In many communities across the country there has been the fear of "flight." In some communities it has become a reality to some families; in other communities there is talk, but enrollment patterns and trends have not been altered.

The proposed federal education policies of tax credits and vouchers could well expedite the movement of students to private schools, and these are critical issues to study and address. The impact of tax levies and school finance reform measures will also be of great significance in determining the status of private schools in the years to come.

There are two major issues which provide the basis for a discussion of the increased popularity of private school education: (1) whether the number and proportion of students previously attending public schools has increased, and (2) an identification of reasons and/or conditions for families to choose to transfer or initially enroll children in private, rather than public schools. This chapter addresses these issues by presenting data from a recent study of public and private schools, by reviewing the results of five studies on this situation in local or unified school districts across the nation, and by discussing the reasons why students are enrolled in private schools.

Results from a Survey of Private Elementary and Secondary Schools

The National Center for Educational Statistics recently conducted a survey

of private elementary and secondary schools in the United States. Among its findings were that 20 percent of the nation's elementary and secondary schools in 1980-1981 were private; 11 percent of the nation's school age population in that year attended private schools (or one out of every 9 students); and 10.5 percent of the nation's school age population in 1970 were enrolled in private schools.

The number of private schools remained stable, or increased slightly, in the last decade. The private schools retained more of their enrollment than did the public schools; 10.7 percent for the latter, 6.4 percent for the former. The highest private school enrollment appeared in the North Atlantic region and the lowest attendance patterns were reported in the West and Southwest.

Experience in Selected American Cities

While few national studies have been conducted, selected school districts or researchers have evaluated the movement of students to private schools in five local or unified school districts. A review of the materials from these studies was conducted and the findings are summarized in this section of the chapter. The purpose of this presentation is to identify elements that were critical in each community and, in doing so, to determine the characteristics common to all regardless of the respective demographics or the educational/political climates of each situation.

California Unified School District. A 1981 study by the Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance looked at the proportion of students in given districts attending private schools and the conditions and perceived conditions of the public schools in a similar location. The findings of the study indicated that income is a key variable in private school attendance. Nonparochial private school attendance was more sensitive to higher incomes than parochial school attendance.

Analysis at a census tract level yielded interesting results. Mean family income, median income, and percentage of families with incomes at least three times the poverty level were positively related to private school attendance. Because of the costs associated with private education, larger families were, however, less likely to send their children to private schools. Parents, who were college graduates and who were employed in professional positions, were more likely to enroll their children in private schools.

Researchers also discovered that the higher the representation of black and Spanish surnamed students in a public school, the higher the proportion of students attending parochial schools. (The hypothesis was that white students were enrolling in parochial schools.) In addition, parochial school enrollment seemed to be reduced where public school spending was high; non-parochial private school attendance correlated positively with high school spending. As might be expected, a concentration of Catholic families was positively associated with private school attendance.

Additional findings were that black residents seemed to attend private schools in no less than the average number for their proportion in the population; that individuals who were fairly new to the area (five years or less) were more likely to send their children to public schools; and that the larger the school district, the greater the tendency for parents to opt for private schools.

San Francisco Bay Area. Another California-based study of private schools was conducted in 1978. This time the emphasis was on the San Francisco Bay Area elementary school district where families sending children to non-public schools had increased from 7 percent in 1970 to 26 percent in 1978. These parents were quite specific about what they wanted: (1) schools with

structured classrooms; (2) an emphasis on basic skills; and (3) consistent, strict discipline.

The major difference in attitude between public and private school parents centered around morality or religious issues. Sixty percent of the public school parents believed public schools do an adequate job in moral education. However, only 8.5 percent of the nonpublic school parents shared that sentiment. In terms of religious breakdown, 53 percent of the public school families were Protestant and 44 percent of the private school families were Catholic. Both Catholic and non-Catholic private school parents believed that moral education in public schools was inadequate.

In terms of private school support, Catholic parents were most likely to have enrolled their youngsters in nonpublic schools in the first grade. Most of them had themselves attended private schools as children.

Private school parents were surveyed in this study for their reasons for choosing private school. There was, of course, a high priority on moral education. Secondly, there was an expressed dissatisfaction with public schools coupled with a viable alternative of a private school. It is important to note, however, that even in parochial schools, parents stressed academic rather than religious reasons for the choice of a nonpublic school.

Seattle Public Schools. A 1977 study of the Seattle Public Schools was conducted in order to assess whether there was a trend toward private schools and to determine parental reasons for leaving the public schools. About half of the parents who had transferred their children expressed a dissatisfaction with the public schools, and a smaller number indicated a preference for moral (religious) training or specific programs unavailable in the public sector.

The problems perceived in the school system were numerous. Included were

such issues as low academic standards; lack of challenge and/or assistance to students; lack of discipline; failure to provide moral training; and decline in quality of teachers. In addition, parents cited as significant many forces from outside the classroom: levy system, a teachers strike, administration policies, integration, retention of teachers based on seniority, and the strong role of the federal government. Program cuts and budget reductions were also identified as influential by many parents.

Parents with incomes under $20,000 most often rated religious or moral reasons for transferring their children. Parents who enrolled youngsters in parochial schools also often mentioned discipline problems, and were more likely to express concerns about busing.

The perceived problems identified above were responsible for student transfers to private schools. The fewest transfers occurred with 16 and 17 year olds; the largest transfers involved those of ages 6, 8, 13, and 14 - grades 1, 3, 8, and 9. Fifty-five percent took place at elementary schools, 30 percent from junior highs and middle schools, and 11.4 percent from high schools. White students made up 76.3 percent of all transfers in the period from 1975-1976. The highest number of students transferred to Catholic, Independent, and Christian traditional schools. Almost 90 percent of all students stayed in the school into which they had transferred.

An analysis of transfers by neighborhood was also conducted as part of this study. Location of the public school was critical in determining the amount of out-migration by students.

Montgomery County, Maryland. In the period between 1974-1979, nonpublic enrollment in this area increased 10 percent; enrollment in public schools declined by 17 percent. A survey was conducted to determine the reasons for

this situation. Of the 1,927 families who had transferred their children, 313 were questioned.

Fifty-three parents stated that they had withdrawn their children from the public schools for discipline reasons; 44 percent cited better instruction in religion and values; 38 percent identified class size and individual attention to students; 32 percent reported poor student achievement in public schools; 29 percent disapproved of the curriculum; and 3 percent wanted to avoid integration. Parents emphatically stated that they had three goals for a school: strong basics, strong discipline, and strong moral values.

A breakdown of parental background shows that parents who withdrew children were more highly educated than the overall population in the country. Fifty percent of the mothers and 40 percent of the fathers had themselves attended nonpublic schools for part or all of the elementary or secondary school. An interesting finding is that nearly half of all the families who transferred a child to a private school still had at least one child continuing in the public schools. Eighty-two percent of those who withdrew children from the public schools enrolled them in church related institutions.

Washington, D.C. Like the other studies, this project examined the reasons why parents removed their children from the public schools. Researcher Porter went one step further by examining what the parents found in the private schools to which they had transferred their children and whether they were indeed satisfied.

The reasons for leaving public schools varied, but can be summarized for discussion purposes: perceived inadequacy of support and challenge for bright children; perceived inadequacy of support for students described as slow, academically weak, or "behind"; concerns about the absence of personal commitment by teachers; lack of special testing, evaluation, and counseling

for placement of students having difficulties; and unavailability of nursery, pre-school, or kindergarten services. One quarter of all parents who had transferred students described being personally alienated by professionals within the public school bureaucracy.

Parents generally expressed satisfaction with private schools. The common themes expressed included the following: value of small school as a community, superior performance of teachers and directors, significant parent involvement and participation of parents in decision making, and a sense of pride and excitement among children and parents. All in all, parents found teachers academically competent and concerned enough to provide extra assistance. They believed that lack of tenure did not protect unsatisfactory teachers as in public schools, and they thought working conditions were better for teachers - class loads smaller, little paper work, and strong parental support.

The Montgomery County parents were primarily middle class individuals. Interestingly enough, a large number stated in the survey that they would prefer to patronize satisfactory public schools.

Common Elements in Student Transfers from Public to Private Schools

It is impossible to generalize from the findings of these studies. Each of the five school districts has its unique demographics, history, and politics; none of which are discussed in the literature. What is possible, and perhaps helpful, is to determine which reasons appear consistently or with greater frequency among all populations surveyed. Table II-One illustrates the parental responses to situations which led to student transfers and indicates the number of times they were mentioned by school districts.[1]

---

[1]The California United School District did not cite reasons.

TABLE II - One

Frequency of Reasons Parents Cited for Transferring Children to Private Schools

Parental Response	Frequency
Religious and moral training	3
Discipline	3
Basic skills	2
Lack of challenge	2
Special services/ assistance to students needing help (gifted, slow, etc.)	3
Classroom structure	1
Quality of teachers	2
Low achievement/academic standards	2
Integration/busing	2
Outside forces	2

Several of the studies also identified significant variables in the backgrounds of parents that transferred their children to private schools. Some of these were: higher incomes; higher educational levels; race - white; parents who themselves had attended nonpublic schools; and religion - Catholic. One of the studies also reported that larger districts had proportionately greater transfers, and districts with higher per pupil expenditures transferred relatively fewer students to parochial schools and more to other private schools.

Conclusion

Contrary to public opinion, the number and proportion of students enrolled in public schools throughout the nation has remained fairly stable over the last decade. Although the number of private schools has increased slightly in the same period, that number has also maintained a fairly stable level. The three most frequently cited reasons for transferring students to private schools are religious and moral training, discipline, and the provision of special assistance to exceptional children. There is some indication that income, education, and parental attendance in nonpublic schools are positively related to private school attendance.

The trends in private school attendance may be altered in the future by action at the federal level. The institution of tax credits and vouchers may expedite the movement of students to nonpublic schools. In addition, tax levies and school finance reform measures may determine the status of private schools in the years to come.